Trade deficit

3879. MISS MABEL REBELLO :

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in October, 2002 the growth of exports was ten per cent whereas the imports witnessed 33 percent rise;

(b) if so, the resons thereof and the steps taken to control imports;

(c) whether trade deficit had touched $ 1.35 billions; and

(d) the steps taken to control this deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) No.Sir. As per provisional estimates available from Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), Kolkata, the growth rate of exports and imports in dollar terms during the month of October, 2002 is 25.05% and 36.66% respectively.

(c) No, Sir. As per DGCI&S data the trade deficit during October, 2002 was US$ 0.94 billion. The relatively high imports is mainly due to oil imports which constitute about 30% of India's total imports. Among the non-oil imports, besides, vegetable oil which is a necessity, items like machinery, transport equipment and pearls, semi precious stones, etc. are needed for export production and industrial activity.

(d) A medium term Export Strategy which is co-terminus with the 10th plan period (2002-07) was announced in January, 2002 with the objective of enhanicng India's exports. In line with this strategy, a number of programmes/schemes have been launched which include schemes like Assistance to States for Developing Export Infrastructure (ASIDE), establishing Agri Export Zones, Market Access Initiative, strengthening "Focus LAC" programme, introducing "Focus Africa", programme etc. In the Exim Policy 2003-04, bosides, the focus on Service exports, policies have been devised to strengthen Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 100% Export Oriented Units (EOU's), etc. A new programme called "Focus CIS" has bee.i introduced. Thus measures are being taken from time to time to increase India's exports and to control the trade deficit.